



The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) Newsletter is a monthly venue of information and updates on afterschool programs and policies.

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Update from Iowa's Afterschool Network Coordinator

Summer hardly has begun and already we're gearing up for back-to-school time. Time really flies, doesn't it? I certainly hope that is because we're all having fun.

At the Iowa Afterschool Alliance, we're gearing up for beginning our pilot project to link high school youth with opportunities for 21st Century skill-building. We know that Iowa lacks models for engaging older youth in afterschool programming. What's more, we know that schools and employers don't always use the same language when talking about student preparation. It's our goal to meet these needs through this project.

On July 27, the Iowa Afterschool Alliance and the Association of Iowa Workforce Partners, with the support of the Institute for a Competitive Workforce, brought together a group of stakeholders to have the first in-depth discussion about this idea. It was extremely thought-provoking and encouraging. Our next step will be to convene a state planning group to

discuss next steps. If you're interested in learning more about our pilot project, please contact me at 515-243-2000 or mrich@sppg.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
Michelle Rich
IAA Network Coordinator



Mark Your Calendars! Iowa Afterschool Alliance's Annual Legislative Breakfast to be held March 8, 2011

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance's annual legislative breakfast will be held on Tuesday, March 8, from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Capitol in the Legislative Dining Room. Please mark your calendars for this important opportunity to speak with legislators about priorities for afterschool in Iowa. It's never too early to get an important event like this on the calendar!

Afterschool Advocates Meet with Senator Harkin to Voice Support for 21st Century Community Learning Centers



Angi Sada and Kelley Sears of the Boys and Girls Club in Council Bluffs visited with Senator Tom Harkin in Washington, DC in June. They were in Washington for the Department of Education's Summer Institute.

As Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, Iowa's Senator Harkin is a critical decision-maker in education policy. The HELP Committee is the body discussing reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of which 21st CCLC is a component.

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance would like to thank members that have already contacted Senator Harkin. By supporting 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) we can help ensure that more kids have access to both afterschool and summer programs. 21st CCLC is the only federal funding exclusively for before school, after school and summer learning programs, but remains underfunded.

Send an email to your members of Congress today in support of a strong, well-funded 21st CCLC program that provides needed support for afterschool and summer learning.

Send an email right now: <http://capwiz.com/afterschool/issues/alert/?alertid=14813216&PROCESS=Take+Action>

Amelia Colwell, the IAA's policy liaison, can help you develop your messages and connect you to your elected officials. Contact Amelia at acolwell@sppg.com and 515-243-2000.

Also, check out the IAA website [policy page](#).



Help the Iowa Afterschool Alliance Improve Access to Professional Development Across the State

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance has released a short survey on afterschool professional development needs across the state. The IAA will utilize the findings from this survey to do a better job at connecting needs to resources across the state through policy development and resources allocation. Please take a moment to complete our survey! Fill it out [online](#).

Issue a Proclamation in Support of Out-of-School Time Programs

Proclamations provide elected officials a great way to show support for afterschool. The [Afterschool Alliance](#) offers a number of useful [tools](#) for creating a policymaker proclamation.

Recently, Michigan City, Indiana, Mayor Charles Oberlie became one of the many municipal leaders to sign a proclamation supporting afterschool programs. Mayor Oberlie's proclamation also requested that the Indiana Congressional delegation vote for full funding of afterschool programs. [Read Mayor Charles Oberlie's proclamation](#).

Additional city proclamations are available on the [APAN Online Community Website](#). Log on to the online community to access proclamations, city examples, national publications, and many more resources. If you have questions about the APAN Online Community Website contact Lane Russell at (202) 626-3008 or russell@nlc.org. If you would like to share resources from your community please email them to russell@nlc.org.

Incorporating Technology into Out-of-School Time Programs: Benefits, Challenges, and Strategies

Technology and technologically-based learning environments are extending student learning beyond the conventional classroom. This new brief from Child Trends draws on results from research and practitioners' insights to outline the benefits, challenges, and strategies associated with using technology in out-of-school time programs. [Click here](#) to read the full brief.

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report 2010

The [Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) has released [Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report 2010](#). This year's report shows that while participation in school lunch programs during the 2008-2009 school year went up, fewer children were fed by last summer by summer nutrition programs. [Click here](#) to read the full report.

Project UNIFY

Project UNIFY is a national project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Its goal is to activate young people around the country in an effort to develop school communities where

all young people are agents of change - fostering respect, dignity and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities by utilizing the programs and initiatives of Special Olympics.

Project UNIFY is for students, teachers and educators who believe that:

- » there should be more opportunities for young people of all ages and all ability levels in schools across the country to make friends and work together for change.
- » students with intellectual disabilities should become part of the core fabric of the education community and be perceived as assets in their school and community.
- » students without intellectual disabilities can and should increase their knowledge, skills and comfort in forming positive social relationships with students with intellectual disabilities and come together to address societal issues.
- » policymakers and education leaders should develop policies and support quality practices that encourage positive school climates with safe and nurturing learning environments for all students.

To learn more about Project Unify please visit there website: [click here](#).

Diplomas Count 2010: Graduation by the Numbers

A new national report from Education Week and the Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center finds that the nation's graduation rate has dropped for the second consecutive year, following a decade of mostly solid improvements. Although the latest decrease is considerably smaller than that found the previous year, the report shows that, on a national scale, 11,000 fewer students will earn diplomas.

The report-part of an ongoing project conducted by the Bethesda, Maryland based Editorial Projects in Education-also tracks graduation policies for all 50 states and the District of Columbia and presents an updated analysis of graduation patterns for the nation, states, and the country's 50 largest school systems.

For more information or to download the report, please [click here](#). It will be provided for free for a limited time.

New Resource for Improving School Attendance and Truancy: Attendance Counts Website

A new website, www.attendancecounts.org, helps schools, school districts, cities, and states improve school attendance and deal with some of the underlying factors that keep students from getting to school. Rather than concentrate solely on truancy in secondary school, Attendance Counts is a national and state initiative that looks at chronic absence – excused and unexcused – starting as early as kindergarten. Research shows that one in 10 kindergarten and first grade students miss a month of school every year, and it affects their academic performance, especially for low-income children.

These absences can leave children unable to read well by the end of 3rd grade, exacerbating the achievement gap. And they can set a pattern of poor attendance and academic failure for older students, fueling the dropout rate. Municipal leaders can be an important partner in this work because of the number of programs sponsored by cities that can make a difference in reducing chronic absences, including early childhood programs, afterschool



programs, and neighborhood safety initiatives. The good news is that cities and schools can turn this problem around if schools start counting absences and intervening to remove barriers to school attendance. But many cities and schools don't know they have a problem because they haven't examined the data. The new [Website](#) provides success stories, research, toolkits and tips for stakeholders.



Local Experiential Learning Course Offered

The Midwest Counterdrug Training Center is sponsoring a course in experiential learning for anyone involved in facilitating after school programs or teaching life skills to youth. The one-day course is on August 27th and is free.

Please check the website at:

<http://www.counterdrugtraining.com/default.aspx/MenutemID/106/MenuGroup/Left+Menu.htm>

If you have any questions, please call SFC Greg Pliler at 515-577-2575 or e-mail greg.pliler@us.army.mil.

Want to see more professional development opportunities in your area? Take the IAA Professional Development Assessment online today. We're working to improve access to professional development across the state. Take it online [here](#).

USDA Hunger-Free Communities Grant Applications Due September 1, 2010

USDA Hunger-Free Communities Grants will help fund research, planning and hunger relief activities such as (but not limited to): food distribution, community outreach, development of new resources, and strategies to reduce or prevent hunger and food insecurity. Two models of grants are available: planning and assessment grants or implementation grants (a community may apply for only one model).

- » Planning and assessment grants (\$1 million set aside, up to \$100,000 per grantee) will fund efforts to assess hunger and food insecurity in a community and then create a strategic plan to become hunger-free.
- » Implementation grants (\$4 million set aside, award size varies by population) will go to communities that have already conducted an assessment and developed a plan to end hunger.

Eligible applicants must be public or private non-profit organizations and can include: state or local governments, agencies providing social services, public health organizations, local schools or educational entities, and private non-profit organizations. A 20 percent local match is required (cash, in-kind, or other non-federal sources).

Applicants are required to partner with one or more organizations in their communities, including their local food policy council. Food policy councils convene public and private stakeholders to examine and improve state or local food systems. A food policy council may advise elected officials on related food policy, advocate for better access to healthy foods, or research the availability and quality of food in a community.

For more information on this grant, please visit the grant announcement page on <http://grants.gov>.



High School Graduation Initiative Grant Opportunity

The High School Graduation Initiative, also known as School Dropout Prevention Program, supports the implementation of effective, sustainable dropout prevention and re-entry programs in high schools with annual dropout rates that exceed their state's average annual dropout rate. Funds may also be used to support activities at middle schools that feed into high schools that have dropout rates that exceed the state's dropout rate. The estimated number of awards is 50. For more information, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/dropout/>.

Community Service Learning Grants Available

Reach Out Iowa

Are you wanting to take your community service work to the next level? If so, look at getting involved with [Reach Out Iowa](#)!

Turn your ideas into action through the Reach Out Iowa service-learning program. Do something to benefit your community while learning the skills you can apply to real life. Apply your interests, knowledge and skills in new ways...serve at a local food pantry while studying the roots of poverty, help a team clean-up a local stream while analyzing water samples, study the consequences of natural disaster and then determine how to help families in need, learn about the health consequences of poor nutrition and lack of exercise and create community awareness and change by creating health fairs and cookbooks... just to name a few ideas. Learn about what other youth are doing at: <http://iowa4hservicelearning.ning.com>; www.dosomething.org; www.gysd.org and be inspired to do something to benefit your community!

Reach Out Iowa informational meetings hosted by Iowa State University Extension:

- » **September 9th, 6:30-8pm** Polk County Extension office, 1625 Adventureland Drive, Altoona, IA
- » **September 14th, 6:30-8pm** Warren County Extension office, 909 East 2nd Avenue, Indianola, IA
- » **September 16th, 6:30-8pm** Waukee Public Library, Waukee, IA

These 90-minute orientations are interactive, fun and will set you on the right path for meaningful service to your community. You must attend the orientation, or schedule one for your own group, in order to qualify for the funding available through Reach Out Iowa. Come learn more about Reach Out Iowa!

Reach Out Iowa is operated in partnership with the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service and funded through Learn and Serve America. The program is offered regionally in Iowa, and is available throughout the state. To see how your group can become involved, please contact us! We want to help you turn your ideas into action.

Contact Marc Peterson at 515.957.5780 or marc@iastate.edu for more information.

KaBOOM! Play Day Grants (Deadline: Ongoing Through October)

Roll up your sleeves and play! Host a KaBOOM! Play Day, presented by Mott's, in your neighborhood and be part of a national celebration to save play in the lives of children. A Play Day is your chance to gather at your community's favorite park or playground for fun games and service projects that celebrate and improve your play space.



If you include an improvement project at your Play Day you could win a \$10,000 grant to further improve your play space. The KaBOOM! Play Day website helps you plan for your big day. You can watch YouTube videos with planning tips, print the set of game and activity cards, and post in the Scrapbook. Plan your Play Day to take place on any day during the week of September 18-26. Learn more at: <http://kaboom.org/playday>

State Farm: Company Grants (Deadline: October 21, 2010)

State Farm is committed to meeting the needs of communities by giving in three areas:

- » Safe Neighborhoods (safety)
- » Strong Neighborhoods (community development)
- » Educational Excellence (education).

Eligible applicants include nonprofit, 501(c)3 organizations, Canadian charitable organizations, educational institutions, and governmental entities. For more details: http://www.statefarm.com/about/part_spos/grants/cogrants.asp.

Reminder

As we continue our work in promoting afterschool programs, below are words from a famous figure to remind us why we do the work we do.

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to never stop questioning."

- Albert Einstein